BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA

To all true beleeving ſoules, who are begotten and born of God through the ſpirit; *Rich*: *Bartlet* wiſheth grace, mercy and peace to be multiplied, &c.

BEloved brethren, (for ſo I preſume to call you, becauſe we are the children of one father) although

we may differ in our apprehensions, concerning some particular Ordinances.

To you I dedicate this little book for this end, that there may be no strife between me and you, because we are brethren. Now, for as much as it is so pleasant a thing for * brethren to live together in unity; my endeavour is to regaine those that are otherwise minded, and for those that are like minded (2) to * keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; and upon that account I have publi-

* Ps. 133. 1.

(2) same-ly to live in unity.

* Eph. 4. 3.

shed

shed this little book, to shew the true grounds of brotherhood, which is, the being children of one father, adopted by the same spirit, heires of the same promise, joynt heires with the same Christ. And also by way of caution, I have laboured to perswade al true beleeving souls, that they take heed, that they reject not any of the children of their Father, because (peradventure) some have not attained to the like measure of knowledge with themselves, but rather

to receive them, and labour with all meekneſſe, to inſtruct them in thoſe truths, which they are not enlightned in. That to the weake, thoſe that are ſtrong, may become as weak, that they may gaine the weak, and not to keep at diſtance, from any gracious ſoule, becauſe they know not ſo much as others, nor cannot declare ſo much as others; But to love owne, and receive them, becauſe they are born of God, as well as others; for although many

a precious ſoule may bring forth but 30 fold, yet ſeeing it is good ſeed, and ſowne in good and honeſt hearts, let them not be deſpiſed by thoſe that bring forth an 100 fold; for we ſhall find that among the ſons of God, ſome babes ſome young men, ſome fathers, ſome aged in the holy underſtanding, ſome newly entred therein, yet all children. So that where we find the good ſeed ſowne in the good and honeſt heart, bringing forth good fruit, though in ſome more and ſome leſſe,

we should love and own them. For this we find to be the example of Christ, not to break the bruised reed, nor to quench the smoaking flax, but to have much respect to the lambs and little ones that believe in him; which spirit may be upon, and in us all, is the prayer of the unworthy servant of Christ, and also yours for Christs sake.

Rich. Bartlet.

London this
sixth day
of the 12 month
אדר vulg.
Feb. 13. in
the year 1653.

To the Reader.

READER if thou beest one of the new creation, and a subject of that Kingdome that consists of righteousnes & peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, I hope thou wilt

wilt accept of my ſmal mite, caſt into thy hand; for although it is but ſmall, yet I hope it is good ſeed, and I doe aſſure thee it is not in the leaſt intended by me, to be the ſeeds of contention, but that which tends to peace and unity; and to this end I have ſown it and diſperſed it abroad, hoping by the bleſſing of God,

God, when it fals upon good & honeſt hearts, it will bring forth good fruit; and although it may not bring forth an hundred fold, yet if it bring forth but thirty fold, I ſhall rejoyce, and think my labour well ſpent.

But if thou beeſt one that is in the ſtrife and contention, ſmiting thy fellow ſervants, either

ther becauſe they know more then thou or becauſe they know not ſo much as thou, then my prayer is, that the ſpirit of the Lord Jeſus may meet with thee, and turne thee out of that way, leſt in thy perſiſting therein, the Lord ſhould come upon thee, before thou art aware, and find thy feet * ſwift to ſhed blood,

* Or to hate thy brother without a cauſe. Mat. 5. 22.

blood, because the way of peace thou hast not known, and shall deale with thee, according to what he hath threatned in *Mat.* 24. 51. But I shall leave what I have written to the Lords disposing, and thy consideration.

R. B.

THE NEVV BIRTH, &c.

John 1. 12, 13.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power (or (a) priviledge) to become, or (b) to be made the sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name: which were borne, not of bloud, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

(a) *Hoc jus.*
(b) *Fieri.*

THE Evangelist St *John* having in the beginning of this Chapter declared the Eternall power and Godhead of

the Lord Jesus Christ, as *verse* 1,2,3. he afterwards commeth to treat concerning his manhood, as verse 14. compared with the 11. in the 14 verse, we shall find that the word which was in the beginning with God, and was God, was made flesh, and came and dwelt amongst us; and therefore in the 11 verse, it is said, *he came unto his own, but his own received him not.* He came unto his own, that is, to the *Iewes*, his owne peculiar people, he came to his owne Nation, the place which he had chose for to set up his name; and therefore the word is in the Neuter Gender. (c) But his owne received him not, that is, his own people of that Land, did

(c) *Ad sua venit.*

did not receive him; and therefore the word is put in the Masculine Gender; (d) so that his owne people the *Iewes*, the seed of *Abraham*, according to the flesh, which were his by the old Covenant, made with them, they received him not: So that the Apostle's words were made good, * *That the naturall man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.* But there were some of the seed of *Abraham* according to promise, they that were true *Israelites* indeed, those that were borne (not only of blood, and of the will of the flesh, and of the will of man, but) of God; which persons did receive Christ, and are declared in the words of the

(d) & *sui eum non susceperunt.*

* 1 Cor. 2. 14.

Text: *But as many as received him, to them gave he this priviledge, &c.*

In the words of the Text, you may obſerve theſe foure particulars.

Four particulars in the Text.

1. That there are certaine perſons, to whom the Lord Jeſus hath, and will give this power and priviledge to be made the ſons of God.

2. You may obſerve, who thoſe perſons are, to whom Chriſt hath, and will give this power and priviledge to; and they are thoſe that receive him: *But as many as received him, to them gave he, &c.*

3. You may obſerve who they were that did receive Chriſt, and had this priviledge given, and thoſe were ſuch

such as beleeved on his name; *to them gave he this priviledge, to be made the sons of God* [*even*] *to them that beleeve, &c.*

4. You may observe who or what these persons were, that did beleeve in the name of Jesus Christ, and they were those which were borne of God.

Even to them that beleeve on his name, which were born (*not of the will of man, but*) *of God.*

Now from these four particulars, there is this very considerable.

3 Things very considerable.

1. That those that have this priviledge to be made the sons of God, are those that receive Christ.

2. Those that receive Christ are those that beleeve on his name.

3. Those that beleeve on his name, are those that are born of God; [so that]

Note. From the new birth, persons come to believe on the name of Christ, and through beleeving, they come to receive Christ, and by receiving of Christ, they come to have the priviledge of being made the sons of God.

Now although many truths might be raised from the words thus opened; yet I shall at this time, mention but one by way of Doctrine, which may be most suitable to the purpose herein intended; and that is this.

Doct. That true beleeving on the name of Jesus Christ, (by or through which a soule doth

doth receive Christ with the priviledges aforesaid) is a true and infallible Character of a son of God, or of the New Birth.

And this truth ariseth in the words, from a twofold consideration.

1. From the consideration of what those persons were, that did receive Christ, and had the priviledge of being made the sons of God; and they were them that beleeved on his name; so upon that account beleeving is a mark or Character of son-ship.

The truth of the Doctrine from two considerations in the text.

2. Considering that those, that did beleeve in the name of Christ, were such that were born of God, and upon that account, beleeving is a chara-

ter or marke of the New Birth.

Now in the handling of this Doctrine, I shall take this method.

The Doctrine opened in 3 particulars,

1. To shew what is to be understood by the New Birth, or to be born of God.

2. I shall give a description of the sons or children of God, which are begotten and born in this New Birth.

3. I shall shew how true beleeving in the name of Jesus Christ is an infallible character both of the new Birth and son-ship.

4. I shall endeavour to shew what use may, and ought to be made of the whole, by all the people of God.

1. What the new Birth is, or

or to be born of God.

1. Birth or being born, it imports a begetting, and bringing forth of that which is begotten or conceived; or

What birth or being borne doth signifie in a particulars.

2. It is the time wherein a child or Infant hath its first beginning in the world; and this is called the birth or time of its being borne: and this the Hebrew word לֵדָה doth properly signifie, and commeth from the root יָלַד which signifieth to beget or create and bring forth.

But my purpose is not now to speak of that which is born of the flesh and is flesh: But of that which is born of the spirit, and is spirit.

And this spirituall Birth, is that which I call the new Birth,

Birth, or being borne of God.

3 Reasons why the spirituall Birth is called new.

And first I call it the new Birth, for these reasons.

1. Because it is begotten and created in a soule, after the birth of nature; for saith the Apostle *Paul*; in the 1 *Cor.* 15. 46. That was not first which was spirituall, but that which is naturall, and afterwards that which is spirituall; and therefore it is called the new (e) Birth, in *Mat.* 19. 28. *And a being born againe, Iohn* 3. 3.

(e) Regeneratio (or) new Birth.

2. Because that which is begotten and born in this new birth, is a new creature. 2 *Cor.* 5. 17.

3. Because it is called the new man. *Eph.* 4. 24. and *Col.* 3. 10.

Secondly, It is called the being

ing born of God, for this reaſon,

Becauſe that God by his ſpirit doth beget and create, and bring forth this new creature in a ſoule, and this worke of God's ſpirit, is put in oppoſition to naturall births, and therefore it is ſaid in the Text, not of (f) bloods, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

(f) ex ſanguinibus, it is in the plurall number, to ſhew that naturall births doe proceed both from the male and female.

Having ſhewed what the new Birth is, and what it is to be born of God: I ſhall in the next place, give a briefe deſcription of the new creature, which is begotten and born of God in this new Birth, and I ſhall define it thus.

A deſcription of the new creature.

That it is a divine being, called the new man, which the Lord

Lord by his ſpirit hath created and implanted in a ſoule, after the image of himſelfe, in righteouſneſſe and true holineſſe. *Eph.* 4. 24. compared with *Col.* 3. 10. So that as it is ſaid of the firſt *Adam*, that he begat a ſonne in his own likeneſs, after his own image.

Gen. 5. 3.

VVhy ſo the Lord by his ſpirit doth beget ſonnes in his likeneſſe, and after his own image; therefore ſaith the Apoſtle *Paul*, *as we have born the image of the earthy, we ſhall alſo (by this new birth) bear the image of the heavenly.* 1 *Cor.* 15. 49.

Qu. But what is the likeneſſe and image of the ſpirit of God, according to which the new man is created?

An.

An. I answer, first negatively; That it is not the changing of him into the image of corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things. *Rom.* 1. 23. as some prophanely have done, in drawing of the image or similitude of the Holy Ghost, like to the picture of a Dove.

What the Image of God is not.

But secondly, I answer affirmatively, that by the image or likenesse of the spirit of God, is to be understood those holy and blessed graces, by which he is pleased to manifest himselfe in the holy word of God, as namely righteousnesse, holinesse, *love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentlenesse, goodnesse, faith, meeknesse, with many others, that might

What the likenesse of the spirit of God is.

* Gal. 5 22, 23.

might be reckoned up, which indeed are as it were the very nature of the ſpirit of God. And thoſe graces of the ſpirit aforeſaid, they are as the engravings of a ſignet or ſeale, which being ſet home by the power of God upon a ſoule, (as a ſignet upon a ſeal of wax) it ſtamps its owne image, and begets its likeneſſe; ſo that a ſoule receiveth *grace for grace*, holineſſe, for holineſſe, love for love, faith for faith, and ſo of all the reſt of the graces of the ſpirit: And theſe holy and bleſſed graces, they are called the fruits of the ſpirit, in *Gal.* 5. 22, 23. That is to ſay, the ſpirit of God is the good tree upon which they grow, according to the ſaying of Chriſt; a

John 1. 16.

good

good tree bringeth forth good fruit. Mat. 7. 17. So that if any desire to know from whence true grace doth proceed; whether it be love to God, or love to his people, or whether it be true faith, by which any receive Christ, and have the priviledge of being made the sons of God, or whatsoever grace it be; why it may be seen that it doth evidently appeare from the word of the Lord, that it is the proceed and product of the spirit of God, and cannot be expected from any other root; for men doe not gather *Grapes of thorns, nor Figs of thistles*; no more can true faith, or any other grace, proceed from any thing whatsoever, besides the spirit of God.

Gods spirit is the root from whence true faith, or any other grace doth flow.

Mat 7. 16.

Thus

Thus I have given some hints of the new creature, and as it were described the image and form of the new man, which is begotten and born of God in the new birth.

And so I come to the third particular, namely, that true faith in the name of Jesus Christ, is an infallible Character both of the new birth, and new creature.

True faith is a certein marke of the new Creature.

And in the handling of this particular, namely, to shew the true character of son-ship, or of the new birth, I might make use of all the graces of the spirit, which are begotten and born in a soule, in this new birth; but I only name faith or beleeving, because it is only mentioned in the Text; not but

but that I beleeve all other graces are included, and doe accompany true faith, whereſoever it is; as ſhall be ſhewn in its due place. But for the proofe of the thing in hand, namely, that true faith is a Character of ſon-ſhip, and of the new Birth, is plainly held forth in the words of the Text, as may clearly appeare by propoſing of this querie; and that is this.

By what marke or Character may we come to know a true ſonne of God, or one that is borne in the new birth; why the Text giveth this anſwer that thoſe that were made the ſons of God, were them that beleeved in his name; ſo that whereſoever we find true faith Querie.

in any man or woman, we may be confident that man or woman is a child of God.

Secondly, the Text tels us, that true faith and beleeving, is a certaine character of the new birth, as appeares in these words, *them that beleeve in his name, (are those) which were born of God.*

And the Apostle *John* doth fully confirm the truth of this in the first of *John* 5.1. *whosoever beleeveth that Iesus is the Christ, is born of God, whether it be male or female, Iew or Gentile, bond or free, high or low, rich or poor.*

Col. 3.11. Gal 3.26. compared with 28.

And moreover, this truth may be proved by this argument, namely, that the spirit of the Lord, in this new Birth, is

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the root and tree from whence faith springs, and upon which it groweth, as hath been already proved: And Christ tels us, in *Luk.* 6. 44. that every tree is known by his fruit, and that for this reason, *that a good tree cannot bring forth corrupt fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.* So in like manner, the corrupt naturall birth, cannot bring forth the spirituall new man; nor the spirituall new birth, bring forth the corrupt old man; *But that which is born of the flesh, is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit, is spirit:* So that whersoever we find faith, which is a spirituall grace, it is a certaine character that there is the spirituall new birth, from whence it springs. John 3. 6.

Now having proved that true faith and beliefe on the name of Jesus Christ, is a true mark and character of the sons of God, and of the new Birth, I might take occasion to shew what is to be understood by the name of Christ; And secondly what it is to beleeve one his name. But I shall not enlarge upon this; but rather come to shew of what use the Doctrine, as it hath been opened, may be to all the people of God: Only in a few words briefly, to give you my understanding concerning the same.

What is to be understood by the name of Christ.

And, first by the name of Christ, is to be understood whole Christ, that is, whatsoever he is in respect of his God-head, or in respect of his Man-

Man-hood, whatsoever he is in himselfe, or whatsoever he is unto others, is comprehended in his name.

And therefore in this Chapter, out of which the Text is taken, we shall find that he is called the word, which name or title doth include his eternall power and Godhead, as in the 1 *verse*, *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.*

2. It also includes his Manhood, as in *verse* the 14. *And the word was made flesh*, so that in short, the name of Christ may be thus defined, that he is what he is, that is to say, he is what he is in himselfe, that he is what he is to his people,

אהיה אשר אהיה

(g) Or according to the Heb. I will be what I will be.

that he is what he is to his enemies. And this we find to be the name of God, in the 3 of *Exodus* 14. (g) *I am that I am*; which name Christ applyeth to himselfe, in the 8 of *John* 58. *before Abram was I am.* And this is that every one that commeth to God, must beleeve according to that in the 11 to the *Hebrews* and 6 *verse*. *He that commeth to God, must beleeve that he is.*

2. What it is to beleeve on his name, is to make all Jesus Christ the only object of our faith.

Now I shall shew what the word beleeve doth signifie, and import, and then shall come to the uses, that the Doctrine holds forth. The word doth

properly signifie, when it is spoken in relatiō to Christ, a faithfull beleeving of him, a putting our trust and confidence in him, and to commit all to him. So now I have done with the doctrinall part, and shall proceed by way of use.

And the first is this; If this be so, that true faith and beleeving in the Lord Jesus Christ, be an infallible character and marke of the new Birth, and of the sons and children of God, as hath been plainly proved.

1 *Use.* VVhy then it may informe all true beleevers, that they are brethren. A use of information.

And this doth clearly appeare from the Doctrine, as it hath been opened; that all

All the sons of God are brethren,

true beleevers are those that are born of God, and all that are born of God, are the sons of God, and all that are sons of God, must needs be brethren; for this is the true and proper ground of brother-hood, the being children of one father, and upon this account the ten sonns of *Iacob*, did declare to *Ioseph*, that they were brethren, by being the sons of one man. *Gen.* 42. 13. Now, forasmuch as true faith is a character of the new Birth, and of son-ship, and son-ship the true ground of brother-hood; it will undeniably follow, that where true faith is manifested, they are sons of God; and upon that account we ought that are believers to owne them to be our brethren. But

But then the question will be, how is true faith manifested?

Quest.

1. I answer in two things, first by confession with the mouth, as in the 10 *Rom.* 10. *With the heart man beleeveth unto righteousnesse, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

Faith manifested in two particulars.

2. Faith is declared by good works, as in the 2 of *James* 18. *I will shew thee my faith by my works.* But what are the good works that the Apostle doth here mind to manifest faith? why they are implyed in the 15, 16 *verses, That if a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of of dayly food, to feed them, and to cloth them; and not only to say, be filled and be warmed, and not to*

give

give them that which is needfull for the body. And comparing this with the 27 *verse* of the 1 Chapter. We, shall find *That pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this; to visit the fatherlesse and widdow in their affliction, and to keep himselfe unspotted from the world.*

And thus I have shewed you how true faith is manifested, namely, by confession and good works; and where faith is thus manifested in or by any persons, it is a visible mark of their son-ship, and therefore ought visibly to be owned as brethren; and I shall say to every beleeving soule, as *Peter* did in another case, concerning the beleeving *Gentiles*, in the 10 of the *Acts* 47. *Can any forbid*

water,

water, that these should not be baptized, that have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we. So say I, can any forbid that those should not be owned our brethren, that are the sons of God as well as we.

But it may be objected by some, that the Scripture tels us, that those that beleeved were baptized, and the Scripture putteth faith and baptisme togeather, and we cannot judge persons visibly to be our brethren, untill they have submitted to Christ by baptisme. *1 Ob.*

To this I answer, that although baptisme be commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ, for every beleever to practise after faith received, and not to be neglected when the Lord giveth *An.*

giveth them light, to see it to be their duty according to that in the 22 of *Acts* 16. *Arise, why tarriest thou.* Yet I never read in Scripture, that the Lord Jesus did ever declare baptisme to be the great character of the new Birth, or being born of God: Neither doe I find, that the Lord doth limit persons that have received precious faith, that because they are not enlightned in their duty, to be baptized, that they must not therefore practise that which they are enlightned in, and perswaded of, and that because some of the sons of God are babes, and know but little (it may be) in some particular Ordinances of Christ, that therefore they must not be owned

owned to be brethren, by those that know more. And certeinly if the Lord doth not limit persons in this particular, men ought not. But God doth rather command the contrary, in the 14 *Rom.* 1. *Him that is weake in the faith receive yee. If they have faith, though but weak, they ought to be received, and to walk so far as they have attained. Phil.* 3. 16.

Men ought not to limit where God doth not.

But it may be further objected, that the persons before spoken of, doe not only neglect a duty in that they submit not to Christ by baptisme, but they uphold a tradition of man, which is no where commanded in the word of God, namely the sprinkling of Infants, which is a relique of Antichrist,

2 *Ob.*

tichriſt, and ſhall we owne ſuch to be brethren?

An. To this I anſwer, that the upholding of one Antichriſtian point, (for want of light) doth not diſanull perſons to be the ſons of God, and therefore not uncapable to be our brethren. But we find in Scripture, that there were ſome that did hold an Antichriſtian point, (for want of light) which were commanded to be received and owned as brethren, in the 14. *Rom.* 1. The Apoſtle commandeth, *that thoſe that were weak in the faith ſhould be received.* Now the queſtion is, wherein the weakneſſe of their faith did conſiſt; why it doth appear in the following *verſes*, it was in this, that they did obſerve

dayes

dayes and meats, which Ceremonies Christ had abolished and made void by his death.

Now, to observe those things after the death of Christ, which were abolished by the death of Christ, such an act doth in the tendancy of it, deny Jesus Christ to be come in the flesh, and whosoever denyeth Christ to be come in the flesh, is an Antichrist. *1 John* 4. 3. But this being for want of light, the spirit of God would have the Saints to bear one with another.

2. I answer, that those that beleeve in Jesus Christ, and yet for want of light may hold some things which in the tendancy of them may be Antichristian; This ought to be a

2 *An.*

motive

motive to prevaile upon those that are strong, to own and receive them, that they may *support them that are weak and inform thē better in the things of God. And thus much at present by way of information.

In the next place; if this be so, that true faith in the Lord Jesus, be a true character of the sons of God, why then in the second place, it may serve for a use of exhortation to all true beleeving soules, to owne and receive one another as brethren; yea, although many of you may come short (for want of light) both in the knowledge and practice of some things, pertaining to outward forme and order; and that for these reasons following.

1. God

1 Thes. 5. 14.
1 Cor. 15. 1, 1, 2, 3.

Reader, for further satisfaction, concerning this particular; I shall refer thee to a little book called the Storehouse, published by Mr *Fesse*; in which I conceive, all objections that may be thought on are made and answered, from page 93. to 118.

1. God hath received him, *Rom.* 14. 3. And he hath received Jesus Christ, through beleeving, *John* 1. 12.

Now I would desire every soule to consider this; hath God received a soule to be his son, and shall we deny him to be our brother? And further, I desire this may be seriously weighed in the fear of the Lord.

If that God hath received every beleeving soule to be his son; why then this followeth, that *If sons, then heires, heires of God, and joint-heires with Christ.* *Rom.* 8. 17.

1. The children of God are heires; what heires? heires of God: this may be understood in a double sence.

The sons of God are heires of God in a twofold respect.

1. They are heires of God, in regard that they are begotten and born of him.

2. They are heirs of God also, upon this account, in that they have right and title to all that God is, and all that God hath; and therefore saith *David*, *The Lord Jehovah is the portion of mine inheritance. Psal.* 16. 5.

And joynt-heirs with Christ, that is, whatsoever Jesus Christ hath right and title to, every beleeving soule hath the same: And we shall find that this is consented to, and desired by Jesus Christ; as I shall instance in a few particulars. Wee shall find in the 17 of *John* 20, 21. That this is the prayer of Christ for those that beleeve in him.

1. That

1. *That as the Father and Christ is one, so they may be one in them.*

2. *That the same Glory that the Father gave to Christ, Christ hath given to them.*

3. *That the same love that the Father loveth Christ withall, he also loveth them.*

4. *It is the will of Christ, that where he is, they may be also.*

Now upon all these particulars, let every every beleeving soule seriously consider.

Note.

1. Is every true beleever one with the father and the son? And shall not we own them to be one with us.

2. Will Christ give them the same honour, glory and esteem that his father gave him? and shall we so much

dishonour them, as not to owne them to be our brethren.

But what was the glory that the father gave to Christ, why it was a great waight of glory; for the word in the Hebrew (*b*) commeth from a root that signifieth a heavy weight; and therefore the Apostle *Paul* in the 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. calleth it an eternall weight of glory, that is, the father gave Christ abundance of glory, honour and esteem. Why so Christ will give to every beleeving soule, abundance of glory and honour, even as much as they are able to beare. Therefore we ought not to slight those that Christ so highly esteemeth.

(*b*) כבד from whence commeth כָּבוֹד

3. Hath the father loved them, as he hath loved Christ,

and

and ſhall not we love them? certainly we ought, for Chriſt commandeth beleevers to love one another. John 13. 34.

4. Is it the will of Chriſt, that they ſhall be where he is, and ſhall we thinke much, to let them be where we are? Will Chriſt let them be with him, to all eternity, and muſt we (if ever we enter into the joy of the Lord) be with them alſo; and dare we not owne them while they are here?

But againe, Chriſt ſaith, he will that they be where he is: Why we profeſſe Chriſt to be with us, and if we deny any true beleeving ſoules to be owned and received by us, doe not we as much as in us lieth, (contrary to the will of Chriſt) de-

ny them to be where Christ is?

And now, O believing soules, doth God and Christ, so dearly love and esteem you: O then consider what is your duty, and mind what the spirit of God saith unto you; in the 1 *John* 4. 11. *If God so loved you, yee ought also to love one another.*

And that I may prevaile upon beleeving soules, (if the will of the Lord be) to performe this duty, I shall offer to their consideration these particulars.

John. 13. 35. 1. *That by loving one another, you declare your selves to be the true Disciples of Christ.*

1 John 5. 1. 2. *By loving one another, you clearly manifest that you love God.*

3. By

3. *By loving one another, you pay the debt that is due to each other by the Law of God, and if it be not paid, you will one day be arrested for it.* Rom. 13. 8. 10.

4. *If yee doe not love one another, you will appeare to be lyers, if you say yee love God.* 1 John 4. 20.

5. *Those that hate their brethren are accounted no lesse then murtherers by the Spirit of God.* 1 John 3. 15.

And further let me offer to your consideration, *That there is enough of them that are borne after the flesh, to persecute them that are born after the Spirit.* Gal. 4. 29.

There was an * *Esau* to hate *Iacob*; and there was an * *Ishmaell* to mock *Isaac*; and there was a * *Kaine* to slay *Abell*. And therefore the Children of God have small reason to per- Gen. 27. 41. * & 21. 9. * 4. 8.

secure one another, and to disowne and cast off each other. But I shall conclude this particular, with the words of the Gal. 5. 15. Apostle, *If yee bite and devour one another, take heed yee be not consumed one of another.*

And thus I have laid downe divers considerations and motives, to perswade true beleevers to love, own, & receive one another, and now I shal proceed to a third use from the doctrine, which is as followeth.

Use. A third use from this Doctrine, may be to reprove sharply, all those that doe deny those persons to be their brethren, that doe visibly manifest true faith in them, and doe keep at a distance from many precious soules, because they

they are not enlightned in every particular with them in outward form and order, and also it may justly reprove those that doe rather make an outward conformity to some particular Ordinances of Christ, (to wit Baptisme or laying on of hands; which many thousands of gracious hearts are not yet perswaded of) a greater character of a Child of God, then true and spirituall grace manifested.

But such mistaken grounds as these, is to be feared, is too much like the case of the Pharisees, in *Mark* 7.5. Who were offended at the Disciples of Christ, for eating of meat with unwashen hands, for which Christ sharpiy reproves them

them in the 6 verse; not but that it was lawful to wash before they eat. But this was their evill, in that they went about to limit and bind the Disciples by a tradition of men, which God never bound them to.

VVhy so I could wish that it could not be truly said of some in these dayes, in another case: As namely, those that by no means wil admit of any persons into communion & fellowship with them, (though never so holy and precious) before they are baptized; not but that it is lawfull for persons to be baptized before. But to limit and bind up persons though never so gracious, from communion, till they are baptized, is a tradition

dition of men. So that as the *Pharisees* would bind the Disciples from eating, till they had baptized their hands.

So those persons in like manner doe bind up, or keep off many of the Disciples of Christ, from walking in those Ordinances of Christ,* which they are inlightned in, untill they are baptized.

* (viz) with them.

But saith Christ, full well ye reject the command of God, that yee may keep your owne tradition. I could heartily wish, it could not truly be said of some in those dayes, that they reject the command of God, (namely, in refusing to own and receive precious soules upon the manifestation of faith) that they may keep their own

tradition,

tradition, that is, to limit persons that they must of necessity be baptized before they are owned and received into fellowship and communion. Which limitation, I find no where in all the whole Scripture.

Ob. But it may be objected and said, that baptisme is the first Ordinance to be practised next after faith, and therefore the Scripture saith, beleeve and be baptized.

1 Ans. To this I answer in the first place. It is true, the Scripture saith, beleeve and be baptized; but the Scripture doth not say, that a person that beleeveth, must not practise any Ordinance between faith and bap-

riſme; for if it ſhould be ſo underſtood, then a perſon muſt not pray, nor heare, nor read after beleeving, till he be baptized.

But ſecondly, I anſwer, that in my underſtanding, that is the firſt Ordinance to me, which I know firſt, and whatſoever Ordinance the Lord is pleaſed by his ſpirit, to inlighten a ſoule firſt in, why in the practice of that Ordinance, that ſoule ought to walk, according to what he hath received, and not to neglect his duty in what he doth know, and is perſwaded of, becauſe he doth not know all; for in my underſtanding, it is a very dangerous principle, that becauſe a ſoule doth not know every thing, he muſt

2 *Anſ.*

must therefore practice nothing. But for further answering of objections of this kind, I shall refer the Reader to the Storehouse, published by Mr *Iesse*, as aforesaid.

Thus having finished the 3 Use, which was by way of reproofe; I shall in the 4 place add a few words, by way of comfort and consolation, and shall draw to a conclusion.

Use. If this be so, that true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, is an infallible character of the new birth, and of son-ship, and also, if that those that are sons, are heires of God, and joynt-heires with Christ, as hath been made appeare, although it may be that many are not enlightned in some particular

Or-

Ordinances, yet to every such beleeving soule, this Doctrine speaks comfort (that although it may be many of the children of your father, will not owne you to be their brethren) yet God doth own you to be his children, and will give you an inheritance amongst them that are sanctified. And now I shall lay down a word of caution, because I would not be mistaken in what I have written, and shall for this present conclude.

*Acts 20. 32, & 26. 18.

And the caution is this.

That as I desire to love and owne all those that feare the Lord, and beleeve on his name, although they may not be enlightned in every duty, they ought to performe; yet that they

they would take heed that they neglect no duty, that they are enlightned in, for as it is a sin of hypocrisie in any person to practise that outwardly as a duty to Christ, which he is not perswaded of in his heart to be his duty:

So it is a great sin of slighting the Lord, and his commands, when a person shall neglect the practise of any duty, that the Lord hath enlightned him in. Therefore walke according to what yee have attained, and in Gods due time he will reveal more.

A

A briefe description of Antichrist.

HAving shewed you the new birth, and the marks and characters thereof, I shall now lay downe a briefe description of Antichrist, which is much cryed downe in pretence by many in our dayes; and for the better laying of him open to publick view, I shall give you some hints of the signification of his name.

And for so doing, I shall take the word in pieces, and

ſhew you what it properly imports.

Firſt, I ſhall ſhew what the prepoſition *anti* ſignifieth.

And ſecondly, what Chriſt ſignifieth.

1. The prepoſition *anti*, it ſignifieth [for, or in ſtead of] as in *Mat.* 2. 22. and ſecondly it ſignifieth contrary to, or an adverſary againſt.

2. Chriſt ſignifieth anointed, and anſwered to the Hebrew word (*a*) *Meſſiah*, as *John* 1. 41. מָשִׁיחַ

So that the word being put together, and taken according to the firſt interpretation of the prepoſition *anti*, it ſignifieth [for, or in the room and ſtead of Chriſt] and according to this ſignification, Antichriſt is that which is ſet up in the room

room and stead of Christ, and upon this account he is called the man of sinne; who oppoſeth and exalteth himſelfe above all that is called God, or that is worſhipped, ſo that he as God, ſitteth in the Temple of God, ſhewing himſelfe that he is God. 2 *Theſ.* 2.3,4.

So that whatſoever is ſet up in the room or inſtead of Jeſus Chriſt, whether it be within us, or without us, whether it be that which is good in it ſelf, or whether it be that which is bad in it ſelfe, if ſet up in the room of Chriſt, it is Antichriſt.

1. If it be that which is bad in it ſelfe, ſet up in the room or ſtead of Chriſt, it is without diſpute Antichriſt.

2. But ſecondly, if it be that which is lawfull and good in it ſelfe, ſet up in the room of Chriſt, it is alſo Antichriſt.

We have a cleare emblem of this, in the Braſen Serpent, which was erected and made by *Moſes*, *Num.* 21.8,9. And was broken to pieces by *Hezekiah*, as in 2 *Kin.* 18. 4. Now concerning this Braſen Serpent, there is obſervable theſe particulars.

1. That it was ordained and appointed by God, to be ſet up.

2. It was of ſingular uſe, to heale and ſave alive, thoſe that were bitten by the fiery Serpents.

3. It was an eminent type of Chriſt. *John* 3. 14, 15. But not-

with-

withstanding, when the people set this appointment of God (which was so usefull and good for the people) in the room of God; and when they set that which was but a type of Christ in the room, or in stead of Christ, you see it was broken to pieces by *Hezekiah*, and the spirit of God doth justifie him therein, and saith, he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, because it was in the room or stead of God.

Why so any ordinance or appointment of Christ, (whether it be baptisme, or Church-fellowship, or breaking of bread, or whether it be our duties and performances) set up in the room of Christ, is Antichrist.

נְחֻשְׁתָּן

But it is further to be obſerved, that when *Hezekiah* had broken the Braſen Serpent, he called it (*b*) *Nehuſhtan*, that is, a piece of Braſſe, by which name he ſheweth, that in it ſelfe it was but a piece of braſs, and had no deitie in it, and therefore not to be adored and worſhipped. Why ſo the holy and good ordinances of God, through which (in the right uſe of them) the Lord doth manifeſt himſelfe, yet if ſet up in the room of Chriſt, and made the great characters of a ſoules happineſſe, which at the laſt, to ſuch as ſo ſet them up, they will prove to be meer *Nehuſhtans*, as ſounding braſſe and a tinckling cymball.

Thus having ſpoke briefly to the

the firſt particular, I come to the ſecond.

In which is to be remembred, firſt, that the Greek preposition *anti*, ſignifieth againſt, or an adverſary to: And ſecondly, that Chriſt ſignifieth anointed, to ſhew unto us, that Jeſus Chriſt is Gods anointed, and not only ſo, but all that are Chriſts, every true beleeving ſoule is the Lord's annointed, 1 *Iohn* 2. 20, 27. only here is all the difference, Chriſt is anointed above his fellowes. *Pſal.* 45. 7.

So that according to this interpretation, the word doth ſignifie, that whatſoever is contrary to, or an adverſary againſt the Lord's anointed (to wit) Chriſt and thoſe that are

Christs, is Antichrist; whether it be any thing against Christ within us, or whether it be any thing against Christ without us; whether it be that which is against Christ at *Rome*, or against Christ in *England*; whether it be any thing against Christ in a Nation, or against Christ in a Congregation: Antichrist is Antichrist, whersoever it be.

Thus having given a briefe description of Antichrist, and the signification of his name; I shall endeavour to make a little improvement thereof, by way of use.

And seeing we live in the last times, in which are many Antichrists, I conceive it may not be amisse, to exhort all persons in generall, and in particular, se-

seriously to examine, whether there be not more or lesse of Antichrist in them, or set up by them.

And the reason why I presse this duty, is this.

Because that I doe heartily wish and desire, that persons would not only labour to throw down Antichrist without them, but also to be as zealous and willing to throw down Antichrist within them. For when persons doe labour to throw down Antichrist at *Rome*, and to throw downe Antichrist in *England*, to throw downe Antichristian powers, and Antichristian Ministery, and Antichristian maintenance, and many other particulars, that might be named; and yet

yet all this while, have a ſpirit of Antichriſt within them, and by the power thereof, to throw downe Antichriſt without them, it is no more, then for Satan to caſt out Satan.

But it may be, moſt perſons to whom theſe preſents ſhall come, will be apt to juſtifie themſelves, and ſay, we have not an Antichriſtian ſpirit, and therefore this doth not concern us.

Well, if it be ſo, I ſhall rejoyce; but yet notwithſtanding, becauſe it is the property of Antichriſt, to pretend that he is for Chriſt, and although he be a miniſter of Satan, yet he doth transforme himſelfe into an Angell of light; I ſhall there-

therefore propound ſome particular, which through the bleſſing of God, may helpe thoſe whom it may concerne, to know whether Antichriſt be in them or no: And firſt it is to be remembred, that whatſoever is ſet up in the room, or inſtead of Jeſus Chriſt, is Antichriſt; and that being remembred, I would begin firſt, with a covetous worldly minded man, which hunteth for the world, as a ravening woolfe for his prey, and the world he muſt have, though with never ſo great oppreſſion of the poor, and yet it may be, pretend for Chriſt too.

Now let ſuch an earthly minded man examine, in truth, whether his covetouſneſſe doth

doth not raigne and rule over him, in ſtead of Chriſt, and whether he doth not ſet the Idols of his covetouſneſſe in his heart, inſtead of Chriſt; and * *Judas*-like, had rather have the bag in his hand, then Chriſt in his heart, and yet pretend for the poor.

* John 12. 5, 6.

The like might be ſaid of pride, where that raignes, and paſſion where that raignes, and voluptuouſneſſe where that raignes inſtead of Chriſt, all which is Antichriſt, and upon this account, we may conclude with the Apoſtle *Iohn*, that even now there are many * Antichriſts, who *Dives*-like, are clothed in * purple, and fine linnen, and fare deliciouſly every day, when poor *Lazarus* lieth

* 1 Iohn 2. 18.

* Luke 16. 19, 20.

lieth starving at their doors.

I shall come in the next place to examine the legall professor, who it may be can say, I thank God I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, proud, and passionate: but on the contrary, I fast twice in the week, and give tithes of all that I possesse; and pray oft, and give almes to the poor, and many other things.

But will you say, this is Antichrist too?

I answer, that those duties in themselves, are not Antichrist, but when they are put in the room of Christ, and set up as a mans righteousnes, and to make them his saviours; this is Antichrist, for Christ is the only saviour of them that be-

beleeve, and not mens duties and performances.

I have only one particular more, concerning this first branch of Antichrist, which I could heartily wish, if it were the will of the Lord, that there might be no cause to mention it; but so it is, that when the sons of God are met together, this Antichrist also commeth amongst them, and sitteth in the Temple of God, and by his power even in the children of God themselves, causeth them to exercise dominion over each others faith, and causeth as it were, *Ephraim* to envy *Iudah*, and *Iudah* to vex *Ephraim*: But God hath promised, that the envy of *Ephraim* shall depart, and then they shall not vex one

ano-

another any more.

And thus I have done with the application of the first branch of Antichrist.

And now I come to make some application upon the second branch, which is this;

That whatsoever is contraty to, or an adversary against the Lord's anointed, (to wit, Christ and all that are Christs) is Antichrist.

Now for the further opening of this particular, I shall shew you, that as the Greek prepositon *anti* doth signifie, contrary to, or an adversary against, that it doth agree in signification with the Hebrew word *Satan, and this the Apostle *Paul* plainly sheweth, in the 2 *Thes.* 2.9. speaking of Antichrist, the man שָׂטָן

man of sin, whose comming (saith he) is after the working of Satan; so that if we look how Satan works, why after the same manner Antichrist doth worke, and they are both as one.

And this word Satan or Antichrist, it is applyed in Scripture, sometimes to the Devill, as he is an adversary to Christ and his people.

Sometimes to wicked men, as they are adversaries to Christ or his people.

Sometimes to good men, when they act evilly against Christ or his people.

1. It is applyed to the Devill, as he is an adversary to Christ, as doth appear by many Scriptures, as *Mat.*4.8. compared

pared with 10 of *Luke* 22. 3. See also *Revelations* 12. 9 and 20. 2.

2. This name is applyed to the Devill, as he is an adversary to the children of God, as may be seen from *Job* 1. 6. to the 7 verse of the second chapter. Also 1 *Pet.* 5. 8.

2. It is applyed to wicked men, which are adversaries to Christ or his people; as in the 1 *Kin.* 11. 14, 23, 25. In all which places, that word which is translated adversary in the English, it is in the Hebrew, Satan. שָׂטָן

3. It is applyed to the children of God themselves; when they act evilly; as in *Mat.* 16. 23. we may find, that when *Peter*, one of the Apostles of

Chriſt, began to rebuke Chriſt, telling him, that it ſhould be far from him, to go to *Jeruſalem*, to ſuffer many things of the Elders and chiefe Prieſts and Scribes, and be killed, and be raiſed againe the third day, ſaying, theſe things ſhall not be unto thee. Now this his ſpeech being ſo contrary to what Chriſt came into the world for, and alſo in that act, he being ſuch an adverſary to all thoſe that Chriſt came to dy for, as well to himſelfe as to others; Chriſt turned and ſaid unto him, get thee behind me Satan, as if he ſhould have ſaid, get thee behind me, my adverſary, thou art an adverſary to me, and an adverſary to thy ſelfe, and to all my people,

in what thou hast done, thou art Antichrist to purpose.

Now concerning these three particulars, I shall not so much at present mind the first and second, because this book is dedicated to the sons and children of God, and therefore I shall rather endeavour to make some improvement of it, by way of use to them.

And for that I shall consider the case of *Peter*; and

Therein shall first mind, what he rebukes Christ for, and what he perswades him from.

2. What the tendancie of his rebuke and perswasion was.

3. Christ's answer unto *Peter*, upon the whole.

1. That which *Peter* did re-

buke Chriſt for, was this; becauſe that Chriſt told him he muſt ſuffer death, and riſe againe, according to that in the 24 of *Luke* and 46. That it did behoove Chriſt to ſuffer, and to riſe from the dead the third day: But *Peter* tels him, this ſhall not be unto thee; Lord be it far from thee.

But now in the ſecond place, I ſhall obſerve the tendancy of *Peter's* ſpeech.

1. It did tend to hinder Chriſt from doing and ſuffering that which the father had appointed him to, for the Father had appointed and prepared Chriſt a body, that he might offer it up as a ſacrifice, once for all.

Heb. 10. 5. 6, 7, 10.

2. His rebuke and perſwa-

ſion

sion did tend to the ruine of all persons, whom Christ came to reconcile to God by his death, because that if Christ should not have dyed, there had been no reconciliation to God, neither for *Peter* himselfe, nor others, as the Scripture doth abundantly manifest. Rom. 5. 10.

3. I shall now consider Christ's answer to *Peter* upon this; and that is, get thee behind me Satan, thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

Now from *Peter's* case, we may observe these four particulars.

1. That some of the chil-

dren of God, may be so far over-powred by a Satanicall, and Antichristian spirit, as to rebuke persons for, and perswade them from, that which is according to the will of God, and beneficiall to his people. Thus you see *Peter* did to Christ, and he rebuked him, saying, be it farre from thee Lord, this shall not be unto thee.

2. We may also note, that Christ doth declare, that those that doe rebuke any person for doing what God hath appointed, or perswade them from it, that they are Satan or Antichrist, and in that act, adversaries to him. Thus you see Christ did to *Peter*, get thee behind me Satan.

3. We

3. We may further observe, that when any shall rebuke a person for doing what God hath appointed, that Christ is much offended at it, for so he tels *Peter*, thou art an offence unto me.

4. And in the fourth place, we may observe, that when any person shall rebuke for, or perswade a soule from any thing that God hath appointed, and that wherein he may be serviceable to others, it is becauſe they savour of the things that be of men, and not the things that be of God.

Now from what hath been spoken and observed concerning *Peters* case, there might be divers uses drawn, as first.

1. to examine whether there

be none in these dayes, that doe rebuke persons, for doing what God hath appointed, and perswade them from that, wherein they may be serviceable to others.

I feare upon strict examination, that there would bee some found that do not only rebuke, but persecute also

2. It might be of use, to inform all that doe so as aforesaid, that in such acts, Christ giveth them the name of Satan, Antichrist, or adversaries, against him and his people.

3. It may serve to reprove all those that have, or doe rebuke any persons, as aforesaid, as doth appeare by the words of Christ, to *Peter*; get thee behind me *Satan*, thou art an offence unto me.

4. It may serve by way of caution, to those that have so done, that they take heed they doe

doe so no more.

Thus I have given some hints of what use might be made of the particulars before mentioned: But I shall not enlarge upon them, but leave the judicious Reader to enlarge them in his private meditations.

And I might come in the next place, to shew that every lust and corruption in the heart of man, is Antichrist, although it be not brought into word nor actions, because it is contrary to Christ, and an adversary against him. But I shall leave this till some other opportunity, and commit what I have written, to the blessing of God. Amen.

FINIS.

Courteous Reader, I intreat thee to mend these faults with thy pen, as followeth.

IN *page* 35. *line* 13. *the word every is put twice together, strike out one of them.* In *page* 43. *line* 17. *read these for those.*